



UNITED STATES AIR FORCE **MEDIATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**

Effective 6 February 2012

*Office of the General Counsel
Dispute Resolution Division
SAF/GCD*

Summary of Changes: Revises portions of the narrative summary, Program Guidelines (Attachment 1), and Sample Application letter (Attachment 2) to comport with Air Force Instruction (AFI) 51-1201 (21 May 2009). Revises criteria for certification at each level, Section 4 of the Program Guidelines, as follows: requires appointment by the Commander and eliminates the alternative option of being otherwise available for assignment by the ADR Manager to mediate workplace disputes (4.a.(3)); permits Air Force assigned, coordinated, or approved mediations of workplace disputes if condoned by the installation AF ADR office (e.g. Federal Executive Board cases) (4.a.(4) and 4.b.(1)); adds the requirement of eight hours of refresher training for Level I certification if the basic mediation course was not completed within a year of the certification application (4.a.(5)); revises the extent of the Level II requirement of 16 hours of continuing education in conflict resolution during each of the preceding three years to 16 hours total during the preceding two years (4.b.(2)); adds a new provision requiring Level II and IV mediators have no pending complaints of ethical or professional standards violations (4.b.(5) and 4.d.(5)); eliminates the requirement of a particular settlement rate for Level III and IV certification; adds the requirement that completed client evaluations rate the mediator services as satisfactory or above in 80% percent of the evaluations for Level III and Level IV (4.c.(1) and 4.d.(1)); and moves the minimum 8 hours of Diversity Training from Level II to Level III (4.c.(4)). Revises other sections of the Program Guidelines as follows: updates SAF/GCD's mailing address (5.e); provides a fax number for application submission (5.e); clarifies documents required in the application stating that a minimum of four client evaluations or feedback sheets must be submitted with at least two from the same mediation session (Section 6); reverts back to the original certification period of 2 years and clarifies renewal and lapsed certification procedures (Section 7); eliminates immediate certification (former Section 9); updates the records disposition reference to comply with the Records Disposition Schedule (Section 9); and revises program revisions and effective date (Section 10).

I. Introduction

The Dispute Resolution Division of the Air Force General Counsel's Office (SAF/GCD) is responsible for Air Force Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) policy and manages the Air Force ADR Program, including general oversight of Air Force mediation standards in workplace disputes. The predominant mediation method for Air Force workplace disputes is the facilitative method. To be fully successful, the facilitative method requires a mediator with considerable skills and experience. Most mediators in Air Force workplace disputes are internal, collateral duty Air Force mediators, supplemented by contract mediators, mediators from the

Investigations and Resolutions Division (IRD) of the DoD Civilian Personnel Management Service and other federal agency mediators. Under current guidelines as reflected in AFI 51-1201, paragraph 25.3, an Air Force collateral-duty mediator must meet the following minimum qualification requirements: (1) successful completion of the Air Force Basic Mediation Course or a comparable course consisting of at least 30 hours of combined classroom and role-playing mediation instruction focusing on the facilitative method of mediation; (2) co-mediation in three or more workplace disputes; and (3) appointment as a mediator by the installation commander or designee. For Equal Opportunity (EO) complaint mediations, the mediator must also meet Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) requirements specified in Management Directive 110, Chapter 3, Section IV.B.

The Air Force Mediator Certification Program was established 1 January 2006, and revised 1 October 2007, to supplement the basic mediator qualification standards in AFI 51-1201 with additional criteria to measure and recognize mediator proficiency based primarily on experience and training. SAF/GCD firmly believes that the health of any ADR program depends on the quality and skills of its neutrals and that these skills must be developed and honed over time with training and experience. Moreover, effective delivery of mediation services requires matching the proper skill-level and experience of a mediator with the issues and complexities of a particular dispute. The goal of the Air Force Mediator Certification Program is to recognize mediation skills and to provide proficient dispute resolution capabilities by encouraging new and experienced mediators, and the ADR Managers who assign them to cases, to improve their skills through a combination of continuing education, training and further mediation experience.

II. Program Description

The revised Air Force Mediator Certification Program Guidelines at Attachment 1 establish the certification requirements for Air Force mediators and the minimum standards for Level I (Basic), Level II (Intermediate), Level III (Advanced), and Level IV (Master) levels of proficiency. These levels of proficiency assure proper management of the mediator corps, while also assuring the quality of mediation services provided to the parties in Air Force workplace disputes.

Certification is effective for a period of two years, from the date of the mediator's certification, and may be renewed or upgraded to a higher level, if program requirements are met. Certified mediators as of 6 February 2012 will remain certified for four years from the date of their last certification. At the end of their four year term, the two year period will apply. Each successive level builds, in part, on the levels before it. Generally speaking, a mediator certified at one level does not have to reaccomplish the requirements for that level in order to renew certification or to apply for certification at a higher level (although the greater requirements of the higher level must be met). Thus, a mediator who fulfills the 16 hours of additional education/training requirements for Level III certification does not have to establish an additional 16 hours to recertify at Level III or apply for Level IV, but if applying for Level IV, would have to meet the additional education and training requirements specifically applicable to Level IV.

SAF/GCD does not expect or desire that all Air Force mediators aspire to Level IV. The escalating rigor of the requirements from Level I to Level IV is intended to maintain a distribution of mediation skills that resembles a pyramid. We expect all Air Force mediators who are being maintained on mediator rosters to be able to meet the certification requirements of at least Level I, even if they choose not to seek certification. Most Air Force mediators on active rosters should also be qualified for Level II certification, whether they seek certification or not. ADR Managers or others who manage mediator rosters should view the Level II requirements as their guidepost for allocating mediation assignments and training opportunities, even if they do not require mediators to be Level II certified. Level III and especially Level IV are intended for those mediators who, through a combination of experience and training, have demonstrated their ability to effectively mediate any workplace dispute under any circumstances. Because of the more stringent certification requirements, the Air Force anticipates the number of mediators achieving Level III and Level IV certification will be relatively small.

III. Certification is Voluntary

The Air Force Mediator Certification Program is **voluntary**. Major Commands (MAJCOMs) and installations are not required to adopt it for their mediators, and certification is not required for Air Force mediators to mediate Air Force workplace disputes, except in two circumstances: Air Force mediators must be at least Level II certified to (1) travel on temporary duty (TDY) using Air Force ADR Program funds (administered by SAF/GCD) to mediate cases at other bases, and (2) mentor or co-mediate with other mediators for the purpose of evaluating and recommending them for Level I certification. SAF/GCD may grant waivers to these requirements if circumstances warrant. All other mediation duties will continue to be unrestricted regardless of certification status, subject to the minimum qualifications set forth in AFI 51-1201, paragraph 25.

Notwithstanding the voluntary nature of certification (except as noted above), MAJCOMs and installations **may** set their own standards for mediator proficiency within their commands by requiring collateral duty mediators to meet specific certification levels as set forth in the program, and they are encouraged to do so. ADR Managers at MAJCOM and installation levels are reminded that competency of the mediator is a standard of conduct (AFI 51-1201, paragraph 26), for which both the mediator *and* the ADR Manager are responsible. While certification at Level I provides *prima facie* evidence of a minimum degree of competency for purposes of ethical standards, it may not define the required level of competency for more complicated or difficult cases. Mediation of disputes with complex or unusual issues, significant command and/or outside interest, a history of animosity between the parties, or a combination of these factors, may require mediators with qualifications signified only by the higher levels of certification. MAJCOMs or installations shall not under any circumstances require certification at any level higher than Level II.

Attachments:

1. U.S. Air Force Mediator Certification Program Guidelines, dated 6 February 2012
2. Sample Application for Certification

Attachment 1
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
MEDIATOR CERTIFICATION
PROGRAM GUIDELINES
6 February 2012

1. Purpose, Scope and Definitions.

- a. To maintain and promote a voluntary certification program for Air Force mediators.
- b. To provide a graduated certification process recognizing varying levels of training and experience.
- c. To ensure a means for Air Force mediators to meet ethical standards of competency.
- d. To improve and maintain a skilled corps of Air Force mediators to provide the highest quality mediation services to disputants in Air Force workplace disputes.
- e. For purposes of this Program, an Air Force mediator is a civilian employee or uniformed member of the Air Force who mediates or is authorized to mediate Air Force workplace disputes (including EO complaints, employee grievances and appeals, and other employee or labor-management disputes arising in Air Force facilities), whether as part of his or her full-time duties or on a collateral duty basis. Mediators from non-Air Force sources (e.g., contract mediators, IRD and other federal agency mediators) are not Air Force mediators and are not covered by this certification program.
- f. For purposes of this Program, and in particular the “Requirements for Certification” in Section 4 below, the term “mediation” shall have the meaning ascribed to it in AFI 51-1201, Attachment 1.

2. Implementation and Compliance.

- a. Certification is voluntary. SAF/GCD will not require any Air Force mediator to apply for certification or to be certified at any level in order to be eligible for duties as a mediator in an Air Force workplace dispute, except as follows:
 - (1) Mediators who are sent TDY to mediate disputes at other installations using Air Force ADR Program funds (administered through SAF/GCD) shall be at least Level II certified. SAF/GCD may waive this requirement on a case-by-case basis when sufficient extenuating circumstances are shown.
 - (2) Mediators who mentor or co-mediate with another mediator for the purpose of evaluating and recommending that mediator for Level I certification under Section 4.a.(4) below shall be at least Level II certified. SAF/GCD may waive this requirement when the evaluating/mentoring mediator is clearly qualified for

certification at Level II or higher but is not certified solely for reasons unrelated to skill or competence, e.g., the mediator is an IRD, other federal agency, or contract mediator and therefore not eligible for certification under this Program.

- b. Notwithstanding Section 2.a. above, a MAJCOM may in its discretion require Level I or Level II certification for Air Force mediators assigned to its constituent installations who are appointed to mediate workplace disputes at those installations.
- c. Notwithstanding Section 2.a. above, an Air Force installation may in its discretion, if not prohibited by the parent MAJCOM, require Level I or Level II certification for any Air Force mediator assigned to that installation and appointed to mediate workplace disputes.

3. Certifying Authority.

- a. The SAF/GC Associate General Counsel for the ADR workplace dispute program is the certifying authority for certification Levels I through III.
- b. The Principal Deputy General Counsel of the Air Force must personally approve, in writing, all Level IV certifications, and may certify Levels I through III.

4. Requirements for Certification.

- a. Level I (Basic). To qualify for Level I certification, an applicant must:
 - (1) Satisfactorily complete the Air Force Basic Mediation Course, or a comparable course of instruction consisting of a minimum 30 hours in the classroom that teaches the facilitative model of mediation.¹ Completion of a course other than the Air Force Basic Mediation Course may require proof of completion and proof of curriculum to ensure compatibility.
 - (2) Demonstrate mediator characteristics and standards of conduct (e.g., judgment, temperament, communication and listening abilities, comprehension, impartiality, demeanor, etc.) as attested to by the installation ADR Manager.²

¹ **Basic Mediation Course Requirements include:**

- Introduction to the Mediation Process: Facilitative Model
- Interest-Based Negotiation
- Understanding Active Listening
- Effective Settlement Agreement Writing
- Understanding Mediator Ethics
- Understanding and Adhering to Confidentiality Requirements
- Mediation Role Plays (minimum of three, with at least one as the mediator)

² The term “ADR Manager for Workplace Disputes” is defined in AFI 51-1201, Attachment 1, as “[a]n individual appointed...to promote the use of ADR processes for resolving workplace disputes, to facilitate the development and implementation of the organization’s workplace disputes ADR plan, and to provide oversight of the organization’s workplace disputes ADR program.” IAW AFI 51-1201, ¶ 12, the installation ADR Manager is responsible for managing the installation’s ADR program. Each installation should have only one ADR Manager for workplace disputes.

- (3) Be appointed by the Installation Commander or Designee, which may be the installation vice or deputy commander or, if applicable, the installation Executive Director, as a collateral duty mediator, IAW AFI 51-1201, ¶ 11.5.
 - (4) Participate in a minimum three co-mediations or mediation mentoring sessions in Air Force assigned, coordinated, or approved workplace disputes, each under the guidance of an experienced mediator, who provides feedback, a written evaluation, and recommendation for certification. The evaluating mediator must either be certified under these Guidelines at Level II or higher, or must be waived by SAF/GCD from the certification requirement for the reasons stated in Section 2.a.(2) above.
 - (5) Have received either basic mediation training or an 8-hour refresher training, as specified in AFI 51-1201, ¶ 25.1.4, within the year preceding the date of the Level I certification application.
 - (6) Have no pending complaints of ethical or professional standards violations.
 - (7) Be recommended for Level I certification by the installation ADR Manager, accompanied by the written evaluations. If the recommendation disagrees with the evaluations, the ADR Manager will address the basis for disagreement in the recommendation.
- b. Level II (Intermediate). To qualify for Level II certification, an applicant must have a current Level I certification, or show completion of or compliance with the basic requirements of Level I. In addition, the applicant must:
- (1) Have a minimum of 20 career solo mediations, at least 15 of which occurred in Air Force assigned, coordinated, or approved workplace disputes, and at least 8 of which occurred in the two years preceding the application for certification.
 - (2) Have a minimum of 16 hours of continuing development or refresher training in interest-based negotiation or facilitation skills every two years for the preceding two years. The annual 8 hours of refresher training specified in AFI 51-1201, ¶ 25.1.4 meets this requirement.
 - (3) Be qualified to mediate EEO cases IAW EEOC MD-110, Chapter 3, § IV.B.³
 - (4) Have a satisfactory record of evaluations from mediation participants.
 - (5) Have no pending complaints of ethical or professional standards violations.
 - (6) Be recommended for Level II certification by the installation or MAJCOM ADR Manager.
- c. Level III (Advanced). To qualify for Level III certification, an applicant must have a current Level II certification, or show completion of or compliance with the basic requirements of Level II. In addition, the applicant must:

³ EEO Qualifications can be obtained by:

- A minimum 16 hours training on federal EEO complaint procedures, theories of discrimination and remedies, OR
- Actual experience with the federal EEO process as an EEO Counselor, EEO Manager, IRD investigator, or labor attorney.

- (1) Have a minimum 75 career mediations in which the applicant was the sole or, in the case of co-mediations, the principal or mentoring mediator. At least half of the mediations claimed for this requirement must have been in Air Force workplace disputes. To meet this requirement, the applicant may include non-mediation facilitative ADR proceedings in which he or she served as a third party neutral, so long as such proceedings are specifically described and account for no more than one-fourth (25%) of the total career mediations claimed. Must have 80% of completed client evaluations rating mediator services as satisfactory or above.
 - (2) Have a minimum 20 mediations or other qualifying dispute resolution proceedings during the preceding three years.
 - (3) Have a minimum 16 hours of continuing education in conflict resolution knowledge, skills, and abilities (Dispute Resolution or Collaborative Decision Making) during the preceding two years. This requirement is in addition to the 8-hour annual refresher training and other training requirements of Levels I and II. For purposes of this requirement, continuing education and training may consist of classroom instruction, distance learning, teleconferences, computer-based training, formal mentoring sessions, “brown bag” lunches, in-service sessions, and practical skills training, or any combination thereof, provided internally by the Air Force or offered through or sponsored by entities such as local court systems, bar associations, civic organizations, academic institutions, technical and trade schools, fraternal associations, sharing neutrals programs, or other entities, public or private, that issue a certificate of completion or otherwise document subject matter and duration of training.
 - (4) Have a minimum 8 hours of Diversity Training, including cultural and gender diversity. This training requirement is in addition to the 8-hour annual refresher training requirement, but may be met through annual refresher training so long as the minimum hourly requirements for each are satisfied.
 - (5) Successfully complete the Air Force Advanced Mediation Course with a grade of B or higher.
 - (6) Have a minimum of 10 career mediations in which the parties were represented by individuals (attorneys or non-attorneys) and/or organizations.
 - (7) Have no pending or substantiated previous complaints of ethical or professional standards violations.
 - (8) Be recommended for Level III by the installation ADR Manager, with concurrence by the MAJCOM ADR Manager.
- d. Level IV (Master). To qualify for Level IV certification, an applicant must have a current Level III certification, or show completion of or compliance with the basic requirements of Level III. In addition, the applicant must:
- (1) Have a minimum 150 career mediations, in which the applicant was the sole or, in the case of co-mediations, the principal or mentoring mediator, with 80% of completed client evaluations rating mediator services as satisfactory or above. At least half of the mediations claimed for this requirement must have been in Air Force workplace disputes. To meet this requirement, the applicant may include non-mediation

- facilitative ADR proceedings in which he or she served as a third party neutral, so long as such proceedings are specifically described and account for no more than one-fourth (25%) of the total career mediations claimed.
- (2) Have a minimum 30 mediations or other qualifying dispute resolution proceedings during the preceding three years.
 - (3) Successfully complete an Advanced Negotiation or Conflict Resolution course (minimum 24 hours). This requirement is in addition to the 8-hour annual refresher training and other training requirements of Levels I through III. This requirement may be satisfied through classroom or practical training programs (including distance learning and computer-based training) offered by public or private academic or technical training institutions for which a certificate of completion, diploma, or other documented evidence of satisfactory completion is given.
 - (4) Demonstrate ability to competently mediate complex and/or high visibility disputes.
 - (5) Have no pending or substantiated previous complaints of ethical or professional standards violations.
 - (6) Be recommended for Level IV by the installation and MAJCOM ADR Managers.
 - (7) Be personally approved for Level IV certification in writing by the Principal Deputy General Counsel of the Air Force.

e. Waiver and Substitution of Requirements.

- (1) SAF/GCD may waive a particular requirement for certification at any level if, in its judgment, the applicant can otherwise demonstrate compliance with the standards of competency for that level. For example, SAF/GCD may waive all or part of the co-mediation/mentoring requirement for Level I certification if the applicant produces a written recommendation signed by a Level III or Level IV certified mediator and based on actual observation of the applicant's unassisted performance as a mediator in an actual mediation. Waivers will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will not be routinely granted.
- (2) SAF/GCD may, in its discretion, substitute other qualifying training or experience for one or more requirements in any level. For example, if an applicant for Level III or IV certification has completed a graduate-level program in conflict or dispute resolution at an accredited college or university, SAF/GCD may substitute that training for the requisite Advanced Mediation training or courses in Advanced Negotiation or Conflict Resolution. SAF/GCD may also substitute mediation experience gained in other federal agency or private sector workplace disputes if, in its judgment, such experience provides the necessary grounding to provide the degree of competency required for a particular level of certification.
- (3) An application for certification seeking waiver or substitution of a requirement should identify the particular matter for which waiver or substitution is requested and should provide justification. If SAF/GCD rejects a waiver or substitution request and the rejection results in disapproval of the application or certification at a lower level than that requested, it will state the reason for the rejection IAW Section 5.f. below.

5. Application for and Issuance of Certification.

- a. A mediator may apply for certification at any level whose requirements he or she believes are met.
- b. The application need not be in any particular format, but must be in writing and must at a minimum contain the following (see Attachment 2 for a sample):
 - (1) The level of certification requested;
 - (2) The applicant's qualifications relevant to the specific criteria for the level requested;
 - (3) Supporting documentary evidence as specified in Section 6;
 - (4) The applicant's contact information;
 - (5) The date of the application; and
 - (6) The applicant's signature.
- c. All applications for certification must be submitted through the applicant's servicing ADR Manager, who will ensure the application is complete and includes all required documentary support. Installation ADR Managers who submit their own applications for certification will skip this step and the next step (Section 5.d.), and will instead submit their applications directly to the parent MAJCOM ADR Manager for review and recommendation as specified in Section 5.e. below. MAJCOM and Direct Reporting Unit (DRU) ADR Managers (i.e., Air Force District of Washington, U.S. Air Force Academy, or Air Intelligence Agency) who apply for certification should submit their applications directly to SAF/GCD as specified in Section 5.e. below.
- d. The installation ADR Manager will attach his or her recommendation for or against certification. A recommendation against certification, or a recommendation that varies from the recommendations of co-mediators or mediation mentors in a Level I certification application, must give reasons for the recommendation. All recommendations must be signed and dated by the ADR Manager, and should include the ADR Manager's duty telephone number (DSN and commercial), email address, and office mailing address.
- e. Once endorsed by the installation ADR Manager, applications for Level I and II certifications should be sent directly to SAF/GCD. Applications for Level III and IV certifications must go to the MAJCOM ADR Manager for endorsement before being forwarded to SAF/GCD. MAJCOM and DRU ADR Managers submit their applications directly to SAF/GCD. Send hard copy applications to: SAF/GCD, 1740 Air Force Pentagon, Suite 4C759 Washington, DC 20330-1740. Allow at least 10 duty days for regular mail, two duty days for FedEx or other overnight service deliveries. Scanned applications and supporting documents may be submitted electronically to SAF/GCD if they are legible. Email scanned applications to SAFGCD.workflow@pentagon.af.mil. FAX submissions can be sent to DSN 223-2802.
- f. SAF/GCD will review each application and, if the requirements are met, will issue to the mediator a signed and dated certificate indicating the appropriate level of certification. If

an application for certification fails to meet the requirements for the level applied for, but does meet the requirements for certification at a lower level, SAF/GCD will issue a certification at the lower level, giving the reason(s) for the lower-level certification. If the applicant is already certified at the lower level, the certification will be treated as a recertification at that level IAW Section 7. The servicing ADR Manager will also be notified of the certification or recertification. If SAF/GCD denies an application for certification and does not issue a certification or recertification at a lower level, it will notify the applicant and the ADR Manager of the denial in writing, specifying the reason(s) for the denial.

- g. SAF/GCD will maintain a roster of all certified Air Force mediators, indicating the level of certification, date of issue and expiration date.

6. Documentation Requirements.

- a. Documentary support for any level of certification must be sufficient to demonstrate its authenticity and relevance to the requirement it supports.

- b. Documentation includes:

(1) For Level I:

- a. Photocopies of training certificates, diplomas, Standard Form 182, transcripts, or other documents showing satisfactory completion of basic mediation training. For non-Air Force basic mediation training, documentation should include a photocopy of the course syllabus or a brochure showing the subjects and activities covered.
- b. A statement, signed by the servicing ADR Manager, indicating that the applicant demonstrates appropriate characteristics, adheres to standards of conduct and has no pending complaints (or previous substantiated complaints) for violation of ethics requirements or standards of conduct.
- c. A photocopy of the letter of appointment as a mediator signed by the applicant's installation commander or designee.
- d. Photocopies of a minimum of three evaluations signed and dated by the co-mediator or mediation mentor.
- e. Recommendation by the installation ADR Manager.

(2) For Level II:

- a. Attestation by installation ADR Manager or applicant as to the number of mediations completed, agency for whom the mediations were conducted, and attestation that 8 occurred in the two years preceding the application.
- b. Photocopies of training certificates, diplomas, Standard Form 182, transcripts, or other documents showing satisfactory completion of eight hours of refresher and diversity training.
- c. Paperwork demonstrating an EO career or 16 hours of EO training.
- d. Photocopies of a minimum of four satisfactory client evaluations with at least two from the same mediation session. Attestation from applicant or

servicing ADR Manager that applicant has had a satisfactory record of evaluations.

- e. A statement, signed by the servicing ADR Manager, indicating that the applicant has no pending complaints (or previous substantiated complaints) for violation of ethics requirements or standards of conduct.
- f. Recommendation by the installation ADR Manager.

(3) For Level III and IV

- a. Number of mediations performed and percentage of favorable client evaluations. This can be either a record kept in the normal course of business showing total career mediations performed and mediations performed within the requisite time period and their outcomes, OR, in the absence of such a record, an original written statement, signed by the applicant and attested by the ADR Manager, providing this information in a manner sufficient to reasonably establish its accuracy and completeness.⁴
 - b. Number of mediation performed during the preceding three years.
 - c. Photocopies of training certificates, diplomas, Standard Form 182, transcripts, or other documents showing satisfactory completion of required training. This should include the grade received in the Advanced Mediation course for Level III applicants.
 - d. A statement, signed by the servicing ADR Manager, indicating that the applicant has no pending complaints (or previous substantiated complaints) for violation of ethics requirements or standards of conduct.
 - e. A statement confirming that at least 10 career mediations have involved parties represented by individuals or organizations.
 - f. Recommendation by the appropriate official pursuant to the guidelines in Section 4 above.
- c. In cases where the authenticity or relevance of a document cannot be determined, SAF/GCD may contact the applicant and/or the ADR Manager for additional information. Unless there is specific evidence that a document is not authentic or was submitted in bad faith, SAF/GCD will give the applicant the benefit of the doubt and treat the document as authentic.
- d. Any absence of documentation to support a particular requirement for certification should be explained in the application so SAF/GCD can determine whether to credit the applicant with satisfying the requirement notwithstanding the absence of documentation or other evidence.

⁴ The installation's annual ADR report to GCD should show the number of career mediations and mediations during the applicable time period for mediators listed in the report, but it does not show career settlement rates.

7. Duration of Certification and Recertification.

- a. Certification for all levels is valid for a period of two years from the date it is issued by SAF/GCD. Upon effective date of this Revision, four-year certifications issued under previous Program Guidelines will retain the four-year certification from the original date of certification, with the option to renew at the two-year term after their four-year certification.
- b. A certification may be renewed for an additional period of two years if the renewal request is submitted to SAF/GCD within 60 days after the expiration date of the prior certification period.
 - (1) To the extent feasible, SAF/GCD will notify certified mediators and their servicing ADR Managers of expiration 60 days before the expiration date. To facilitate notification, certified mediators should advise SAF/GCD of any changes in duty address or other contact information.
 - (2) To be recertified at the current level, the mediator need not reestablish the certification criteria for the level being renewed, but must furnish evidence that during the previous two-year certification period he or she performed at least five mediations or other qualifying proceedings, received required mediation refresher training, and had no violations of ethical or professional standards of conduct.
- c. Certification will be renewed at the current level unless the applicant furnishes evidence demonstrating he or she meets certification standards at a higher level, in which case SAF/GCD will treat the renewal as an application for certification at the higher level and issue the certification accordingly.
- d. A certified mediator may apply for upgrade certification to a higher level at any time during an active period of certification. If SAF/GCD approves the higher level, the new certification displaces the previous certification and a new two-year certification period begins as of the date of certification at the higher level.
- e. A certification lapses after 60 days beyond its expiration date. A renewal request submitted after the 60-day lapse period has run will be treated as a new application, even if it is for the same level. SAF/GCD can make an exception and accept the late request as a renewal, for excusable delay or other good cause.

8. Decertification.

- a. SAF/GCD may decertify any certified mediator for a substantiated violation of ethical or professional standards. The servicing ADR Manager will be notified of any decertification action involving a mediator assigned to a location for which the ADR Manager is responsible.
- b. An installation ADR Manager can decertify individual mediators for violation of ethical or professional standards, after notifying the MAJCOM ADR Manager and SAF/GCD.

- c. Decertification does not *per se* disqualify a mediator from further service as an Air Force mediator, but may be a basis for initiation of action under AFI 51-1201, paragraph 40.1 (“Complaints About Mediation Services”).
- d. A mediator decertified by SAF/GCD under Section 8.a. may request reconsideration of the decertification by submitting a written request for reconsideration within ten calendar days of receiving notice of the decertification. The request should state the grounds for reconsideration, and must be forwarded through the servicing ADR Manager to SAF/GCD. Within 20 calendar days of receiving the request, the Principal Deputy General Counsel will render a decision, which shall be final.

9. Records Management.

- a. Personal information submitted or generated in connection with an application for certification will be stored on paper and/or electronic media. Proper measures to limit access (e.g., locking file cabinets, electronic passwords) will be maintained.
- b. Records are subject to the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. 552a. The system of records notice was published in Vol. 70, No. 226 of the *Federal Register*, page 71096, on 25 November 2005, with an effective date of 27 December 2005. Use the following blanket PAS:

Authority: Administrative Dispute Resolution Act of 1996, 5 U.S.C. 573, Neutrals; 10 U.S.C. 8019, General Counsel of the Air Force.

Purpose: To evaluate Air Force mediators for certification at certain skill levels commensurate with knowledge, training and experience.

Routine Uses: This information will be used to determine whether to certify Air Force mediators who apply for certification, and at what level of proficiency. In addition to the disclosures generally permitted under 5 U.S.C. 552a(b), these records may be disclosed outside DoD as a routine use pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552a(b)(3) under the DoD “Blanket Routine Uses” published at the beginning of the Air Force’s compilation of record system notices.

Disclosure is voluntary. However, failure to provide the information requested may result in denial of certification.

- c. Records will be subject to the records disposition requirements in the Air Force Records Information Management System Records Disposition Schedule, currently located at <https://www.my.af.mil/gcss-af61a/afrims/afrims/>. Applications for certification and all associated documents will be retained in SAF/GCD during the active period of certification and for one year after certification lapses, after which they will be destroyed. Rejected applications for certification will be retained in SAF/GCD for a period of one year and then destroyed.

10. Program Revisions and Effective Dates.

- a. SAF/GCD may make revisions to the Mediator Certification Program from time to time, subject to MAJCOM and base-level ADR Manager review and comment. Revisions are effective upon publication to the field through command channels and/or by posting for general access on the Air Force ADR Program website, www.adr.af.mil.
- b. This second revision shall take effect on 6 February 2012. Previous versions of the Mediator Certification Program are superseded as of that date.

Attachment 2
SAMPLE APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION

MEMORANDUM FOR _____ *[Base ADR Manager]*
[MAJCOM ADR Manager, if applicable]
SAF/GCD

FROM: Applicant's Name

SUBJECT: Application for Certification as a Level _____ Mediator

1. In accordance with the provisions of the Air Force Mediator Certification Program Guidelines, I hereby apply for Level (I) (II) (III) (IV) *[specify the level for which you are applying]* certification as an Air Force mediator.
2. In support of this application, I am submitting the following mediation and other relevant training and experience: *[List the courses and other training programs completed, number of mediations or other qualifying proceedings conducted and success rate (if applicable), and other activities you want SAF/GCD to consider in evaluating your application. Be sure to attach whatever documentary evidence you have to support the activities claimed. List all relevant training and experience, not limited to the Air Force, if otherwise relevant.]*
3. *[If you want SAF/GCD to waive a requirement for certification, or to substitute alternative training or experience for a requirement pursuant to Section 4.e. of the Guidelines, state that here with your justification for doing so.]*
4. My contact information is: *[list your duty station mailing address, DSN and commercial telephone numbers (voice and FAX) and email address].*
5. *[Provide any other information you would like SAF/GCD to consider in evaluating your application.]*

DATE: _____

(Signature)
PRINTED NAME

Attachments:
[List relevant documents and attach to application]

1st Ind, Application for Certification, _____ (Applicant's Name)_____ (Date)

FROM: Base ADR Manager *[or MAJCOM ADR Manager if applicant is a base ADR Manager]*

TO: SAF/GCD *[or MAJCOM ADR Manager, if applicable]*

1. I have reviewed _____'s application for Level ____ certification pursuant to the Air Force Mediator Certification Program. I recommend that it be *[approved/ disapproved/ approved at a lower level (specify level)]*.

2. My reasons for this recommendation follow *[specify reasons for recommendation, including if the recommendation is to disapprove the application or to approve it at a level lower than that applied for]*:

3. If you have any questions, please contact me at (DSN and commercial telephone number and email address).

//Signed//
ADR Manager

2nd Ind, Application for Certification, _____ (Applicant's Name)_____ (Date)

FROM: MAJCOM ADR Manager *[if applicable]*

TO: SAF/GCD

1. I have reviewed the application for certification and the installation ADR Manager's recommendation. I concur/nonconcur with the recommendation *[you may state the reason(s) for a concurrence; you must state the reason(s) for nonconcurrence]*.

2. Accordingly, recommend the application be *[approved/disapproved/approved at a lower level (specify level)]*.

3. If you have any questions, please contact me at (DSN and commercial telephone number and email address).

//Signed//
MAJCOM ADR Manager